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Following is the text of remarks of Henry M. Lester,
President of Thomas Paine National Historical Association, at
Unveiling of Bust of Thomas Paine at the Hall of Fame, New York
University, Sunday, May 18, 1952.

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"Shortly after the close of the Revolutionary War, Thomas Paine found himself in financial straits, and no wonder. Besides his writings, which had done so much to crystalize the urge for Independence, Paine had contributed a large amount of his personal wealth to the cause of the Colonies, when it was so desperately needed, feeling that when the struggle was over, he could count on some recognition from the government. In spite of his appeals to Washington and others he received very little of material recompense. It was at this time that the State of New York, by an act of legislature in 1784 presented to him a farm of some 277 acres in New Rochelle... in consideration for the eminent services rendered to the United States in the progress of the late war... and as a testimony of the sense which the people of this State entertain of

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his distinguished merit".

"While Paine did not spend a great deal of his time on the farm, it was here, in his later years, that he considered his home and where he chose to be buried. Although his mortal remains were removed in 1819 by William Cobbett and taken to England where they disappeared, a monument to his memory was erected in 1837 on the site of his grave, through the efforts of Gilbert Vale, a New York publisher and ardent admirer and biographer of Paine. A bronze bust, modeled by Wilson MacDonald, was presented to the Thomas Paine Association and was placed on the monument and dedicated May 30th, 1899, before a large audience. The monument was turned over to the City of New Rochelle in 1905 and now stands at the intersection of North and Paine Avenues.

"Near the monument stands the cottage in which Paine lived when he was in New Rochelle. It is not on its original site but is on a part of the farm. Also nearby is the Thomas Paine Memorial Building, an imposing stone structure containing exhibits in cases and around the walls and a room for meetings. Ground for this was broken in 1925 by Thomas A. Edison, at that time vice president of the Paine Association.

"While Paine did not leave behind him much of this world's goods, there are many things here that are associated with him. One of the most interesting is a Franklin stove. This type of stove, many of which are in use today, was invented by Benjamin Franklin, and this particular one was given by him to Paine and was used by him. Other articles include a pair of gloves, a watch, a small leather bound chest used by him when he carried state papers out of Philadelphia, when that city was evacuated. The Association also

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possesses several letters and manuscripts in Paine's handwriting, and a representative collection of books and pamphlets by and about him, including some of the earliest editions. Both of these buildings are open to the public, without admission charge, every afternoon except Mondays. The Paine farm is now a high class residential community and contains some 375 beautiful homes.

"The Thomas Paine National Historical Association was founded in 1884 and was reorganized and incorporated in 1906. Through the years the Association has done much to honor the name of Paine for what he was, a great patriot. No greater honor and recognition could come to him than his inclusion in this Hall of Fame, something which has been urged by the Association for many years.

"I take great pleasure therefore in presenting the bronze bust and tablet on behalf of the Thomas Paine National Historical Association, in the City of New Rochelle and the State of New York, and those contributors who have helped make it possible."

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